



DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

Project Number: 3016712

Address: 3811 California Avenue SW

Applicant: Hugh Schaeffer for S + H Works

Date of Report: Tuesday, December 09, 2014

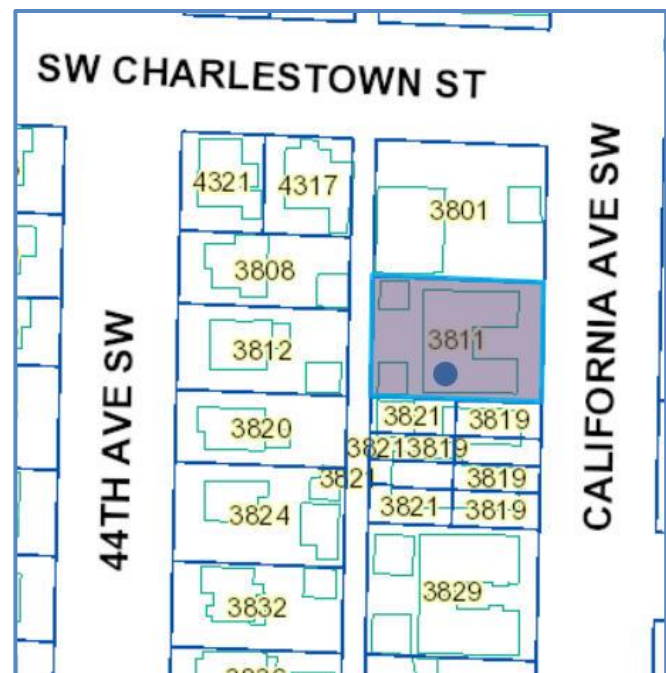
DPD Staff: Holly J. Godard, planner

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 3 Residential Commercial (LR3 RC)

Nearby Zones: (North) Neighborhood Commercial 1, 30 foot height limit (NC1-30)
(South) Lowrise 3 Residential Commercial (LR3 RC)
(East) Neighborhood Commercial 1, 30 foot height limit (NC1-30)
(West) Single Family 5000 (SF 5000)

Lot Area: Approximately 9,711 square feet.



Current Development:

The site is located in west Seattle on California Avenue SW between SW Charlestown Street and SW Andover Street. The site is on the west side of California aAve SW t zoning edges as listed above. Currently the site has a one-story, brick courtyard development of multifamily dwelling units that were built in 1927. There is parking on the site.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The surrounding development, north and south along California, is principally a strip of lowrise and commercial zoning and associated uses surrounded by single family neighborhoods. Development to the north is a one-story gas station and mini-mart. To the south is multifamily development. Multifamily development is contemplated across California in the NC1 zone.

Access:

Access is via the existing alley.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

There are no mapped Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) at this site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal is to demolish the existing buildings and build eight (8) three story townhouses. The townhouse configuration is proposed to be in four groups of 2 townhouses. Eight parking spaces are proposed to be accessed off of the alley. Rooftop decks are proposed and access via exterior stair from floor three of the units. Amenity space will be provided. One design adjustment is contemplated per 23.41.018D.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

After consideration, the Landmarks Preservation Board declined to award landmark status to the existing courtyard development.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment letters have been received.

PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Planner provided the following

siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading: Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

Maximize daylight for the northern and/or northwest duplex(es) (building 4) by rotating the two units to locate entries off of the courtyard. The northwest duplex, north unit is especially shadowed and a dark unit oriented to the minimart and gas station. Adjust the placement and/or design of the structure(s) on site to maximize daylight.

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites: Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning: Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-4. Massing Choices: Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

As per the presubmittal notes items 3, 12 and 6 create greater privacy for the single family across the alley. Create windows that vary from the proposal such as angled bays that focus views to the south and north for some or all of the façade. Cut away upper level looming bulk on the alley or make architectural adjustments to give a sense of reduced bulk.

The street edge is strong. The recessed, black areas above the front façade doors appear too thin and distract from the façade. Widen that form a small amount to enhance your concept. Add striving (plants that fill the space at maturity, but do not destroy the space by over growing.) landscaping to the black mondo grass area. Create a stronger landscape at the edge of the mini-mart.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-B Walkways and Connections

PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities: Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

PL1-C Outdoor Uses and Activities

PL1-C-1. Selecting Activity Areas: Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

Turn the entry doors for building 1 unit B and Building 2 unit C to the interior of the site courtyard for a more intimate and community-building type of entry. Create effective semi-private space from the sidewalk to the patios on the California Avenue front façade. Add fencing at a height between 3 and 6 feet, lockable or not, that blends with the landscaping at the north and south edges. Add the same for the pedestrian walk between the buildings.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs—considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable,

include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

Reduce the building mass at the west side of the building. Create more human scale in the development. Create a break of the canyon/courtyard black and white by using grey on building 4 in the courtyard or by new placement of the units or both. The black and white color scheme and window placement becomes oppressive. Design a more nuanced expression of your concept by using more elements to create human scale, give visual interest, and reduce perceived mass.

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities

DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs: Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space: Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space: Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

Create real relationships with the courtyard. Connections are weak or non-existent. Create areas for residents to experience the courtyard, see the courtyard and use it in meaningful ways. At the presub we discussed stairways on all four corners of the courtyard and I hoped you could design a meaningful alternative for some or all of the buildings. The feature tree is a nice gesture. Show mail box area.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-A Building Materials

DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials: Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness: Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

DC4-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

DC4-C Lighting

DC4-C-1. Functions: Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare: Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

Landscaping at base of the buildings at the parking area is tentative and undersized. Add an entry landscape element such as *acer circinatum* on either side of the entry, add vines, trellis, other trees and increased landscape area. What material is the standing seam vertical siding?

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS

Design Review Staff's recommendation on the requested adjustment(s) will be based upon the adjustment's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the adjustment(s).

At the time of Design Guidance, the following adjustments were requested:

1. **Front Setback (SMC 23.45.518):** The Code requires 5 feet minimum 7 feet average. The applicant proposes approximately 6.5 feet average in two areas on the front façade.

DPD staff was favorable towards the adjustment with increased landscaping, transparent landscape screen and striving shrub and ground cover layer, move two entries as mentioned above.

STAFF DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, the DPD Staff recommended the project should move forward to building permit application in response to the Design Guidance provided.

1. Please be aware that this report is an assessment on how the project is beginning to meet the intent of the Design Guidelines. This review does not include a full zoning review. Zoning review will occur when the MUP plans and/or building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.
2. If applicable, please prepare your Master Use Permit for SEPA review with a thorough zoning analysis listing the 23.45 and SMC 23.54 code section criteria, showing both required and proposed information (include page number where you graphically show compliance). You may want to review Tip 201 (<http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/cams/CamList.aspx>) and may also want to review the MUP information here:
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/mupoverview/default.htm>
3. See this link for SDR process:
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/designreviewstreamlined/default.htm>

4. Along with your building permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report with colored elevations and colored landscape plan.
5. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.
6. I feel that the design did not change much from the presubmittal discussion. I do see a few things move. The building permit will need to show a different design than that presented in the SDR application 11 x 17 packet.